78

LECTURES ON SOME ASPECTS OF INDIAN SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAN

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GENERAL EDITOR:

Dr V. A. DEVASENAPATHI

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BY

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THE Dr S. RADHAKRISHNAN INSTITUTE
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FOREWORD

The Department of Philosophy was started in the University of Madras in September 1927. In August 1964 it was raised to the status of a Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy by the University Grants Commission. From 1976 it has come to be known as The Dr S. Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy.

Since its inception in 1927, this Department has kept in view two major objectives: (1) the study of Indian systems of thought and (2) the study of other systems of thought. Last year the Department arranged for a course of special lectures in furtherance of these objectives.

Dr T.P. Meenakshisundaranar very kindly agreed to deliver five lectures on Social Philosophy and one on Indian Aesthetics. The present volume contains the substance of his lectures on Indian Social Philosophy.

As part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Department, the Special lectures delivered at this Institute are brought out as Golden Jubilee Publications. The Institute is grateful to Dr Meenakshisundaranar for permission to publish his lectures in the Golden Jubilee Series.

The Institute wishes to thank the Government of Tamil Nadu, Dr Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, the Vice-Chancellor, and the other authorities of the University of Madras for the financial aid given for these publications.

The Institute is appreciative of the interest evinced by the University Grants Commission in upgrading the parent Department into a Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, financing it for ten years and for its subsequent and sustained interest in the progress of the Institute.

The Institute is grateful to the late Professor S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri for laying the foundations of the Department on sound lines and to Dr T.M.P. Mahadevan, former Director of the Institute for building up the Department over a period of three and a half decades by his devoted services.

The General Editor wishes to thank his colleague, Dr S. Gopalan for carefully editing the lectures so as to bring out the core-ideas that emerged during the course of the lectures and for seeing the material through the press. The editor is appreciative of the prompt and neat execution of the printing by Avvai Achukkoodam, Madras.

Madras
November 28, 1977

V.A. DEVASENAPATHI
Director

PREFACE

Under a scheme of Special lectures I delivered five lectures as an Introduction to Indian Social Philosophy at The Dr S. Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy last November. These are now appearing in print. No attempt has been made at making this study an exhaustive one. Perhaps only the way of approach has been explained.

I must thank the Madras University, especially Dr V. A. Devasenapathi, the Director, for inviting me to deliver the lectures.

November 20, 1977 T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAN

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LECTURE ONE

Social philosophy, which has come to prominence probably by the end of the last century or at the commencement of this century, is a subject whose scope is difficult to define. The difficulty stems from the problem of defining the scope and subject-matter of philosophy itself, the parent discipline. It is obvious that referring to and analysing Indian social philosophy is much more difficult. The problem here is that we have to spell out what is now understood as social philosophy from the various writings of our ancient seers, sages and poets. I have been called upon to attempt this task in these lectures.

We may commence our discussion with brief references to the nature of science and philosophy and a more elaborate reference to the 'study of society' for, these help us in understanding the nature of social philosophy itself better. Science collects facts, organises and studies them according to a method which is suitable to the 'study' concerned. Hence every science has its own method of organising, classifying and generalising. Science in general is not concerned with value. But philosophy is not solely concerned with facts but is more concerned with the relationship of the particulars (the 'facts') to the whole or the totality, and with value. We have in addition sociology which is a science of society. In doing social philosophy we depend on sociology for facts about society, but we have to go a step further to

analyse the concept of values and the meaningfulness of social relationships which is perhaps presupposed in sociology. Sociology is the science of society. Though the science of sociology is young, society is as old as man. Its antiquity in relation to man is a question which needs discussion, but let us assume that society is as old as man and that the facts about social environment, social order and the intricacies of social relationship are well-known. They might not have been studied from the philosophical point of view earlier but these are to be found in any 'record' man has made. In this way ancient, medieval and modern Indians can certainly be deemed to have thought about social facts, social relationships and their values. From the point of view of social philosophy it is important to note that man is what he is because of his society. Man is not born in a vacuum. He is born in a family. A family is a social group and therefore, human nature can be interpreted to be intimately related to society.

Some thinkers have analysed the question whether society is coeval with the evolution of man. When we analyse the evolutionary processes we find that social phenomena are found even among animals. We have the bee, the white ants and the termites which exhibit social behaviour. But their behaviour is based on instincts. In the case of the bee which probably has been in existence for millions of years, the same 'conditions of existence' have continued and we do not see any change, any progress. The same is the case with termites The instincts of animals do undergo some change but they do not evolve and develop. Animals come together for procreation, for defence, in love and in war. Therefore the social aspect may be regarded as a part of pre-human evolution.

But the case is different with man. He is not in any way similar to his ancestors of the old stone-age or new stone-age or to the cavemen. Many are the stages through

which man has passed. Therefore there is progressive development and evolution and we may even maintain that man has been completely transformed. Therefore the social aspect of man and his immediate predecessors should not be identified with the gregarious aspects of animal life. To say the least, men do not live in isolation like tigers and lions. In fact man is nothing if not society; we cannot think of man without a society in which he is born and the various aspects of human nature are the results of social relations. When we think of charity, love and all the higher aspects of human life, they are intrinsically social in significance. Therefore we may start with the fact that man is a social animal; and that is why all our civilisation, all our culture, all our history, philosophy, all our sciences—have grown to their great dimensions of today. Hence an analysis of human nature is an important preliminary for understanding social thought

If we turn back to the evolutionary process, we can conveniently start our analysis with plant life. To survive they have to draw their food from the atmosphere and from their environment. They are tossed about by storms and other forces of nature. They are at the mercy of these natural calamities. Man, inheriting these capacities is also a vegetative being. He has to eat, drink and live. Hence we find the vestiges of the vegetative aspects in man. The animal-stage which was evolved after the plant-stage has also left its marks on human nature. Man is seen to be governed by instincts and passions which are the characteristic qualities of animals. [1] Thus the vegetative aspects of the plant world

1. The animal by nature is passionate, and its passions are uncontrollable. When the animal is hungry, it forgets everything else. When it wants to mate, it forgets everything else. That kind of passion is also found in man. How many people fall a prey to anger or some kind of desire or other! When they work hard to get the objects of their desire, they forget everything else by almost resolving themselves to achieve them.

and the passionate aspects of the animal world are all ingrained in man, but he has evolved further. The most distinguishing feature of man is *rationality*, the power of reasoning.[2] As the Upaniṣad says, man alone is in a position to be aware of what is happening. A simple example may be given here. The animal eats, but it is not conscious at the same that it is eating. When man eats, however, he is aware that he is eating. Thinking acts as a kind of feed-back. That is why man is in a position to correct himself whenever there is a slip of the tongue etc. The human brain acts as a computer. This is an indication of the self-reflection and self-awareness that he is capable of. In a mild way this may also be called '*ahaṅkāra*'. A man not only does something but also feels *he* is doing and in fact he says *he is doing*. Because of this self-awareness he is in a position to reflect about his own reasoning power and also analyse the purpose of thinking itself. This reflective ability of man is responsible for his wanting to analyse social behaviour and its value and significance for human life.[3] In Indian philosophy we find an analysis of human nature in terms of *guṇas*. These are the well-known *sāttvic*, *rājasic* and *tāmasic guṇas*. The three *guṇas* are not found in isolation anywhere in Nature. We may cite the instance of the '*neruñci thorn*' to illustrate that all three *guṇas* are found in every individual. The thorn has got three prongs and

2. When reason comes up, it has the function (also) of controlling the passions and vegetative activity. Man can organize and control the vegetative and the animalistic tendencies in him. That is his greatness. For example the institution of marriage which is typical of man illustrates the fact that man can organize and control his passions.

3. The fact that man has the vegetative aspect in him makes him search for food ; industries, commerce, economics are all dependent on the vegetative aspects of man This aspect rather than the rationalistic aspect of man is emphasised by Marx when he refers to man as a tool-making animal and as an animal which uses capital. Thinking is not the real characteristic feature of man according to

when it rests, it rests on two prongs and the third will be up. It may be turned in different ways and 'rested' but one prong alone will be pointing upwards always. Similarly nature has endowed all men with the three *guṇas* but only one becomes prominent whilst the other two are subordinated.

Even the best of 'sāttvic' men should eat and sleep. To that extent, they have the characteristics of '*tamas*'. Their activity is due to *rajas* and to that extent they are also *rājasic*. The saints are *sāttvic* by nature. The soldiers are *rājasic*, since the aspect of vigour and action predominate in them. Others whose existence consists only in eating—with no possibilities of a higher kind of life—are *tāmasic*. In the industrialists, the *tāmasic guṇa* represents the vegetative aspects of life, the *rājasic guṇa* represents the aspect of vigour (and to that extent the animalistic aspects of life) and the *sāttvic*, the aspect of 'balance' and 'equanimity',—the more characteristically human qualities.

According to Indian philosophy these *guṇas* are not intrinsic to man as a *spiritual being*. They are the characteristic features of matter, Nature, *Prakṛti*. Man is not bound by them. He is merely a witness of the dance of *Prakṛti*. He may get himself engrossed in it but in reality he stands separated. Here comes something more than

Marx but what is unique is that man is compelled to act and produce. When there is this dependency this is reflected about and gives rise to ideas. The ideas in turn impel one to the productive activity. The productive activity is again subjected to reflection in the mind and it gives rise to the ideas. Our intention is not to go into the details of this theory; suffice it to note here that thinkers like Marx have considered the vegetative aspect (which has grown into the economic activity of man) rather than the rational aspects of human nature as something primary. While we do not mean to under-estimate the economic aspects of human life we do want to emphasize that the economic aspects are given prominence by Marx.

the three aspects,[4] viz , 'consciousness' which is the known aspect of what we call the real self or the *Ātman.*

All the three kinds of development are social facts and in analysing social inter-relationships, we have to consider all of them It must be remembered that even the saint actually develops his 'individuality' only is society. The realisation of the Ātman also comes in only when one passes through all these stages of social development. One has to realise '*Ānnam Brahmam*', (Food is the Absolute) before going on to '*Prāṇam Brahmam*', (Life Breath is the Absolute) '*Vijñānam Brahmam*' (knowledge is the Absolute) and '*Ānandam Brahmam*' (They or Bliss is the Absolute). One has to pass through these stages before reaching the highest, the *Ātman*. Therefore, the highest development of even spiritual life finds its basis and nourishment in the social environment.

The three aspects of life we have been referring to above were emphasised by Plato also and to a certain extent his *Republic* is a book on social philosophy. He refers to people who are merely vegetative, the slaves and such other people. There are also individuals who are active and passionate, the military people. The third kind of men are the philosophers and Plato wants them to govern for the state is to be made perfect. In India also we find a similar classification of society. The term *varṇa dharma* is made use of to indicate the ideal type of division of society in India. The term *varṇa* should not be confused

4. The *guṇas* are like our dresses and other objects which are not intrinsic to our nature. Therefore, we have to think of this also when we analyse human nature It is true that materialists of a particular kind will consider consciousness as a mere epi-phenomenon. The engine which drags the railway carriages is there to drag but all the same there is the whistle which has also been evolved but that is not intrinsic to the characteristic feature of a railway engine. This something as an extra good is an epi-phenomenon. Therefore, people think that what is called reason, intelligence, consciousness—these are not intrinsic to man, that it is a by-product.

with caste or *jāti*, for these are innumerable. The *Gītā* says. *varṇa* is based on *guṇa* and *karma*, the qualities of nature and also the particular behaviour or activity which is inspired by the *guṇas*. Therefore when Krishna talks of *varṇa* he is not thinking of birth at all There is no mention of birth there.

The emphasis is on *guṇa* and *karma*. Therefore the term 'brahmin' does not necessarily refer to the members of the 'brahmin community' of today or even of the earlier times. For the real 'brahmins' are the sages and people who are full of wisdom and have also completely controlled and organised their vegetative and passionate aspects of life. The *kṣattriyas* and the *vaiśyas* of the Hindu scheme of the division of society are comparable respectively to the military and commercial classes envisaged in *The Republic* of Plato. We do not have an equivalent of the *śūdra* class in Plato's classification· According to the Hindu ideas, the *śūdras* are those in whom none of the qualities (*sattva, rajas* or *tamas*) is predominant.

We would like to anticipate a possible criticism against this kind of classification referred to above. Everywhere the three *guṇas* or qualities are present and therefore to speak only of '*sattva* here or *rājasic* there and *tāmasic* elsewhere may not be quite correct even when one refers to the dominant feature. We want to merely state here that when we discuss human nature (and there are various aspects), these all have relevance to social analysis itself. These are aspects which grow into the various branches of our social life, various glories of our social culture and civilization.

But when we refer to 'society', it is not anything which can be 'seen'. What is 'seen' is the 'units' of society, the individuals. Individuals are the concrete things. In a lecture-hall nobody sees the intellectual relationship between the speaker and the listener, for

instance. It is this inter-relationship which is helpful in understanding a social group. Therefore the individual should not be forgotten while speaking of society. Some people sacrifice the individual at the altar of society.

We have been describing human nature from the point of view of society. Almost all the characteristic features of man are merely reflections of social life. Whether one is an industrialist, a military man, or a philosopher—it is all ultimately due to society. Even our relationships at home, the relationships governing father and son, brother and sister and father and mother, get their meaning only in the context of a group called family. It is social life which makes the terms meaningful. None of the aspects of human nature are explicable except in terms of society. Our religion, our mode of dressing, the language we speak—all these represent social aspects and it is rather difficult to think of man as an individual torn away from society.

But yet, the individual has got something intrinsically great in him. There is something beyond the industrial and economic life. There is something beyond the passion, love and all the enjoyments one has. There is something beyond religious behaviour, the cultural aspirations of man, according to Indian philosophy. In the typical Indian philosophical terminology there is something beyond the three *guṇas*, the Ātman. Therefore, from this point of view the individual stands supreme. Even though the realisation of spiritual life comes through the social environment and social development, the individual has a value of his own. As it is sometimes held, society is like a series of zeroes which gets value only when the other numbers come before the zeros in that its value consists in the *individuals*. Whether the individual as such is an ultimate reality may be questioned by certain systems of thought. But 'individuality' is accepted by all systems of ancient, medieval and modern

philosophy. Hence, we have to emphasise that the individual should not be sacrificed.

Society is certainly very important. But it is not a mere coming together of individuals. Just as when the bricks, mortar, timber, iron etc are brought together, there is not merely the coming into existence of the building but something more, a residential house or an University Library which adds a new dimension to human life, when individuals come to form a society, there is something more coming —sociality—which enriches the individual's life and makes him develop his own perfection. Thus it is obvious that the individual and society are reciprocally and intimately related to each other.[5]

The individual is included in and influences family, other groups, the community, the Nation and the Globe and collective consciousnesses and they in turn influence all the rest. Therefore, it is an infinite reciprocity of influences. This is in the words of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi known as the principle of reciprocity. Therefore, really speaking, though one may be in a particular social group, one must remember that a group cannot be taken out of the collective community of man. Therefore, the bigger community includes the smaller group, the smaller community. The smaller community influences the bigger and similarly the individual. The indivi-

5. Science tells us in Particle-Physics that everything in the world is inter-connected. Physics speaks of inertia of Matter. But Max Planck tells us that this inertia will not be there if the other parts of the Universe including distant galaxies are not there. It is the existence of the other parts of the Universe that makes particular Matter to have inertia. As an illustration given in one of the Buddhist texts—*Avataṁsa Sūkta*—there is a canopy of pearls in the land of Indra and there every pearl reflects all the other pearls and this pearl is reciprocally reflected in all other pearls. Therefore, this reciprocity is something unique in the Universe and, naturally when we analyse the concept of social relationship, here also the infinite correlation and the infinite reciprocity should be emphasised.

dual is therefore extremely important, for in the ultimate analysis, he influences not only a small group but the collective consciousness of the world.

This reciprocal relationship once again emphasises the greatness and indispensability of the individual. One cannot remove any one of its elements without disturbing the whole. It is not merely a kind of a part and whole, we should think of something much deeper. Therefore, people talk of the organic conception of society. One cannot remove any one of the organs without doing damage to the organism. Every cell contributes to the organic-holistic nature of a living being. This is the relationship which exists between the individual and society. When we refer to an organic relationship, we should remember that it is only an analogy and we should note that there is a giant of a society wherein the individual simply forms one organ, however important the organ may be like the brain or the kidney or the heart.

But we should avoid the fallacy of misunderstanding an analogy. The organic conception of the state is brought in only to understand better the reciprocal relationship that is characteristic of society. Therefore, we should not create a Leviathan, a big monster of a society which can devour every individual. There is the conception of a *Viśva Puruṣa* that helps to understand the unity which underlies the variety. Beyond this, to take that analogy as a literal fact would be a fallacy.

LECTURE TWO

In this lecture we shall explain how we understand the term 'Indian social philosophy'. It seems to us that the term 'Indian philosophy' should include not only the ancient culture or philosophical thought (of India) but also the contribution made in recent times to the cultural output of the world. Once we understand the term 'Indian' in this wider sense, we will not be compelled to pin ourselves down to any one aspect of our cultural heritage, however important it might be. Ours will be a harmonious comprehension of the whole thought of India at its best. When we understand it in this way, we will be able to appreciate the dynamism of Indian thought which has been developing from the beginning of history to the modern times.

There have been periods of great progress, followed by periods of stagnation in the history of Indian thought. One should not emphasise the period of stagnation and maintain that Indian thought stopped growing at that stage. For, if this problem is studied from the refractory point of view, one may condemn the whole of Indian philosophy. For instance,. if one looks at *varṇa-dharma* as the 'caste problem,' one can condemn it. But we should remember the emphasis was laid on its life-principle, as for instance in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, where it is stated that *karma* (the qualities and actions of man) alone defines *varṇa*. But today we have the birth criteria coming into it and creating all kinds of problems. Therefore, when

we explain *varṇa dharma* at its best, we are not compelled to justify the caste system as it is today or the caste system which was practised in the past. Similarly, there are so many aspects of society and culture which have to be looked at from the idealistic point of view. We have to take into account the living aspects—that which gave birth to them.

When we look at them and study their origins and the vital issues they embodied, it will be appreciated that some of the modern problems are due to our losing sight of the vital issues and being concerned with the dead shells. This is from the time aspect. The other aspect is the regional one. India is a big Continent. It is only during the last few centuries and especially after Independence that we have unity firmly established. But previous to that, there was no political unity but only cultural unity and this cultural unity might have had 'regional colours'. There is a skein of a thread; in some places it is red and in some places it is blue and in some places it is green. All these are intertwined and the glory of the thread consists in the beauty of these variegated colours. Similar is the greatness of Indian culture and Indian thought Therefore we should not over-emphasise the value of the contributions coming from various regions and various sects.

It is very difficult at this distant time to state which aspect of Indian culture or social philosophy is the distinct contribution of one part or the other of this great country. People refer to Aryan and Dravidian cultures. But we do not know what these terms mean. They seem to us to mean only the difference in language; and from a linguistic point of view it may be asserted that language most often has no relation to race. The French language, which owes most to Latin—is, according to some, a corruption of Latin—spoken by the Franks who were not the Latin people themselves. The Latins, the Romans conquered the Franks but the Franks became

not only enslaved to the Latin political system but also to the Latin language. They then adopted the language of the Latins. Therefore one cannot recognise a race in any language. And the question that is sometimes asked is regarding the contribution of the pre-Aryan people (we suppose the pre-Vedic people) and of the tribes of the North Eastern frontiers (the Mongol race). They have all come into the main-stream of Indian culture. We can now speak of the Indic race, if at all it is justifiable to use the word 'race'. Into this big country of India almost all races and religions have come. People who have been driven away from their homes, for instance the jews, have come and settled in India; the Muslims have come and made India their home; and so many other people also have migrated into this country; probably there are traces of it; but it is very difficult to say which are purely Aryan and which are non-Aryan. It may be of some historical interest but from our standpoint it is not very relevant. We are mainly concerned with the major contributions of Indian thought taken as a whole, whatever be the source from which it might have come.

It is agreed by scholars that South India has played an important role in shaping Indian culture; we may be able, after some time, to point to the specific contribution of South India. But what happened during the historical period was this. North India was troubled by invasions and political instability, and the Vedas, the Upaniṣads and the various Darśanas were preserved and commented upon by the great saints of South India. Almost all our Ācāryas hail from the South and though they have been professing to merely comment on these texts, actually they have introduced new ideas, new visions and brought out the deeper implications of the texts. Therefore when we speak of Indian philosophy, we must concede there is the Tamil contribution, the Telugu contribution, the Bengali contribution, the Punjabi contribution, the Marathi contribution etc. In regard to the *bhakti* movement since all the saints who have

contributed to the devotional aspects of our philosophy have sung in their regional languages, there is no difficulty in understanding them. No one can mistake Tulsidās or Sūrdās for Vālmīki. Similarly no one will commit mistakes about Tiruvaḷḷuvar or Cankam poets or Avvaiyār because they have sung in the regional language of Tamil and we can, to a certain extent feel confident in emphasising that these are the Tamil contributions.

But here too there is some difficulty, for when these people came to sing, the main stream of Indian thought had taken shape and form. For example, Tiruvaḷḷuvar is considered the best social philosopher in Tamil Nadu. He has *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, which is called the *mu-p-pāl*-which corresponds to the Sanskrit term *trivarga*. It is legitimately claimed that *Tirukkuṟaḷ* is original but yet one has necessarily to compare this work with the works on *trivarga* in Jaina philosophy and Hindu philosophy. It is then that we can find out the specific contribution of Tiruvaḷḷuvar to this great mainstream. But even while asserting Tiruvaḷḷuvar's contribution, we have to admit that he himself had inherited older ideas. It is only after accepting the elements he had inherited from the Indian tradition that one can specifically point to the original contributions of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. Here also the reciprocal influence of these varying regional cultures can be seen. But today our interest is in the main current, without neglecting the contributions of the various regional cultures.

We may disagree with many of the implications of their thought, but one should not forget, for instance, about the self-respect movement in our century. When we are saying that, we must point specifically to the unique feature of Indian thought. And it is from such a perspective that we should approach the question of social philosophy. The unique feature we are referring to, the acceptance of a *transcendent principle*, need not

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necessarily be considered as opposed to rationalistic principles. Hence the recent contributions of the rationalistic school of South India are not to be looked at as completely opposed to certain implications of Indian thought in general.

Some of the developments of the Self-respect movement may appear to disregard the unique feature of Indian thought, but that is only at the surface level. But if we analyse it carefully we will find that the founders and followers of the movement accept the deeper implications of Indian philosophy, probably not using the phraseology which we are using to-day. For, Indian thought was not against science and rationality. We had Caraka and Āryabhatta and we had so many other great scientists and mathematicians. Similarly in the field of medicine and surgery, Indians have made their own contributions. Even in political science, Kauṭilya's contribution has been extremely valuable. And Vātsyāyana dealing with the problem of sex has shown a deep psychological insight into the treatment of the subject. But what is important to notice is that the emphasis was not only on what one sees but on something which lies behind and above them. One may not like to call it the transcendental aspect. But one need not quarrel with that term. Even our late lamented Ramaswamy Naicker would not have said that life consisted merely in eating, drinking and bringing forth children and dying when time came. If that were the case, he would not have written extensively and delivered so many lectures. But thinkers like him were aiming at something different than merely criticising beliefs. They wanted to change the present unfortunate world. Therefore, they had a higher concept of this ideal which was inspiring them to write, speak and act.

And if one goes deeper, and we suppose, one should, after having accepted to reflect on Indian social philosophy, also point to the justification for this approach

which is essentially according importance not merely to the 'external' or 'outside' factors but also to the 'internal' or 'subjective' factors as well. The spirit of Indian philosophy requires that the subjective aspects of Reality must be taken into consideration and here the deeper and higher-transcendental aspects of man come to the fore.

Even when God is denied by Buddhism and Jainism, they do not believe that the Universe is simply what we see and what we live in. There is something behind it, something which has a higher value than what we actually see and experience. Even the rationalist believes in such an approach to Reality. The dissatisfaction of man today,—in spite of tremendous developments in the fields of science and technology and in spite of material abundance he has been able to 'create' and make for a 'better' and a 'happier' life, may be attributed to the fact that there is a complete shift from the characteristically human values—the transcendent-spiritual values—to the *physical*, understood in terms of the *materialistic*. It is significant to ponder over the fact that in ancient Indian thought even the physical universe was considered in relation to a principle which was trying to express itself. It was believed that everything in the Universe was following some natural law with a mathematical precision, so much so one could predict the movements of the planets with precision. This was attributed to the principle of uniformity in Nature. It was also believed that there was some purpose which could be explained only in terms of an intelligent principle. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi uses the term creative intelligence to express this basic idea which Indian philosophy has always been emphasising.

The spirit of Indian philosophy thus expressed, it is important to reiterate here, can be appreciated both from the references to transcendental principles and from analyses which may be considered to be purely rational. It is useful to take note of the significance of the Vedas

being regarded as providing the basic foundation of Indian thought or systems of Indian philosophy. The metaphysical and mystical meanings that the Vedas are said to possess no doubt point to the transcendent principle, a principle which may be beyond the reach of reason. All the same the need for reasoning about the ultimate truths and the necessity for subjecting them to the rigours of logical analyses and discussing and contemplating about them that the various systems of Indian philosophy have envisaged, is a clear pointer to the fact that the recorded experiences of the Vedic seers provide a Standard for 'verifying' the 'results arrived at by pure reasoning'. The transcendent aspect of Reality was thus clearly implied even while rational analyses were emphasised. Now for instance, when Tiruvaḷḷuvar starts describing the three-fold system of values—*aṟam*, *poruḷ* and *inpam*—he starts with the principle he calls *Kaṭavuḷ*.

Kaṭavuḷ means something *transcendent*. And he refers to that principle as something all-pervasive (*akara mutala eḻuttellām*). Even when we take any sound of the alphabet, behind it is the implicit 'a. a'. After all we have to open our mouths before we produce the other sounds which are merely the variations of that opening sound. Therefore we can maintain that in every sound, this implicit 'a' is there Even as a sap comes out and takes the form of a whole tree, the transcendent principle actualises itself and takes the form of the physical universe. Social philosophy may be thus considered as another aspect of the root principle of creative intelligence. And it is this unique basis which Indian thought has always had. One may call it an ideal, a norm or a value. But this is something implicitly present in all the concrete facts which are studied. The science of 'creative intelligence' may, in this sense be said to stand behind every aspect of Indian philosophy and that it was not a mere theory. For our purposes however all that needs to be emphasised here is that the transcendent aspect which underlies philosophising lends deep meaning and

significance to the attitude of social concern. It is from this standpoint that the mystical experience of the religious saints of ancient India and the meaningfulness of their concern for humanity at large can be understood. For instance, when we listen to Rāmaliṅga or Appar or Nammāḻvār or Poygaiyār or any one of the saints, they may seem to be 'individualistic', they may explain their own personal experiences but behind all that is a loving concern for humanity. "If I see people cry, if I see a child being beaten, Oh! Lord! how much I have suffered", cries Rāmaliṅga. That is the cry. Why should he bother about the child being beaten? He experiences he has identified himself with them, —with everyone—by becoming one with the source of all, the creative intelligence. That was the attitude of the mystics. While the ordinary man experiences his individual centre with all his circumscribed life, the mystic experiences the great centre as expanding to the great circumference of the Universe and beyond. This is clear from *Tirumantiram* which can be described as a 'book of experience'. Tirumūlar talks of many things. The first two chapters are concerned only with *society*. Out of the nine Tantras, two are concerned only with the social aspect. Hence it is evident that even a mystic does not belittle the significance of society. Nammāḻvār weeps for others. Why should he bother about others? "Come along! Oh! World! (*Vammin Ulakīr*) Come along! here is the great road, go and enjoy." Therefore most of his songs are addressed to the world and a few to his own heart and mind. The same thing can be said of Appar and Sundarar. Any poet worth his name, or any saint worth the name is seen to emphasise the social approach. When Tāyumānavar says, "I do not want to escape from this cycle of birth and death" and "I want this life in this world, full of cruelties" (*maranmali ulaka vāḻkkāiyē vēṇṭum*), the clear meaning is that only then he can *serve* the world. The great Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava saints as also the saints of other religions have similarly felt their call to serve humanity. Cēkkiḻār, one of the great Tamil poets reflects

about these saints by inquiring: "What is it they want? Do they want *mokṣa*?" and answers: "No. They are the heroes who refused even *mokṣa*."

What we are concerned with today is to point out that those saints were not other-worldly. It is true that their experiences were something out of the ordinary, yet not unrelated to this world. When Poigaiyār speaks of his experience, he does not think that he sees God. Now here is a way in which the light of the Lord is experienced *in the world*, but experienced concretely in the feeling of *love*. Then comes another Āḻvār who goes within and sees this Light, — life is the big lamp-stand (*Anpētakaḻa*). Devotion is the ghee (*Ārvamē neyyāka*). Therefore, that experience itself is something universal which covers the whole of society. Similarly the Jaina and Buddhist saints have sung the song of love for the suffering world. Thus it is necessary to emphasise that whenever one refers to Indian religions, one should not be misled by what "goes on" by these names. But one should go to the pristine sources, where one finds the emphasis on the universalistic approach, not a limited or a sectarian or a regional approach. It is unfortunate that the universal vision has been and is continuing to be lost sight of. Therefore, when Indian social philosophy is being talked about, one must remember that in an important sense it really encompasses the whole Universe, not merely *human life* but *all* forms of life. That is why Rāmaliṅga pleads for these beings. It is this universal spirit which is behind it. Once we go to the root of it, the problem of individual and society will get solved. There is no real conflict between individual and society. That is merely one way of analysis.

For the purpose of convenience of study we are analysing these things in this way. But behind this is the indivisible whole. Ours is not a limited family in which we live. Our family is a world family. Unfortunately we are overpowered by divisions. But it is well to

remember that in Indian philosophy the whole universe is treated as a family.

On every Tamil platform the sentiment "The whole world is my kith and kin. The whole world is my birth-place", (*yātum ūrē yāvarum kēḷir*) is heard repeated. My birth-place may be in any part of the universe but my birth-place is the indivisible universe and anyone in any part of the universe is my kith and kin. This, we have to realise, is the universal-transcendental outlook. This seems to be the substance of Indian social philosophy—suggesting to man that he should transcend his narrow self and cultivate an universalistic outlook.

LECTURE THREE

We shall now proceed to consider the philosophy of social institutions as conceived in the Indian tradition, for that would enable us to get an insight into the spirit of Indian social philosophy. There are obviously various social institutions but we do not propose to discuss them all in detail. But, even before passing on to a consideration of a few of them, — at least in their essential details — we deem it necessary to refer to the two 'extremes', for they are highly suggestive of the *ideals* of any institution which seem to 'fall' between them.

The two extremes are oftentimes referred to as the worldly-groups and the other-worldly groups. Though the name of the second group (other-worldly group) is not *quite* indicative of what it stands for, it is useful in so far as the emphasis in it is shifted away from mere 'domestic interests'. These are termed respectively *illaṟam* and *tuṟavaṟam* in Tamil. *Illaṟam* is concerned with home, the sweet home; and in *tuṟavaṟam* the whole world becomes the home. There are some who are born as citizens of the world; and such people feel their relationship with the whole of humanity, nay with the whole of animate creation. They are great souls like Meykkaṇṭār, Śaṁkara, Jesus and other great men. Even when they are born, they feel their kinship with every being that is living in this world. Their area of concern stands on a different footing from the other group in which we do *not* always find the feeling of universal brotherhood. It is

true, we all speak of universal brotherhood. But, it will be conceded that universal brotherhood is a mere *concept* for most of us, for we are not really capable of *feeling* for an unknown person in a distant land, with the same amount of intensity as when suffering is experienced by our own kith and kin. But great men like Śaṁkara, Nammāḻvār and Jesus — have developed the feeling of universal consciousness to such an extent that they can feel the suffering of a stranger even as they feel the suffering of their own dear ones. These men have, in the terminology of Bertrand Russell, developed *abstract sensibility*. Perhaps Patañjali would refer to it as *maitrī* and *karuṇa* coupled with *upekṣa*.

It is from that point of view that the Caṅkam poet sings: "Everybody is my kith and kin and every place is my native place." There are some people who have developed that kind of consciousness. The Tamil thinkers describe them as *sāmu siddhars* — as people who have had this realisation or '*siddhi*' even when they are born; these are the real '*tuṟavis*'. They do not renounce anything. We shall explain the real meaning of renunciation as we proceed further. Suffice it to state here that the type of 'feeling for others' that we see in them is contrastible with those of others whose 'consciousness' is still limited. The people of this type may be said to be 'in' *illaṟam*. They are born with no concern for others, but are expected to enlarge their circle of relationships and love. The culmination stage of their love of the whole of animate creation deserves the name of *tuṟavu*.

It will be evident that the *tuṟavu* stage connotes the stage where narrow or limited love is renounced. By means of such a renunciation of the particular and the narrow, a positive, universal relationship is 'experienced' by them.

Thus *tuṟavu* is not getting rid of anything which a person 'has'. It stands for 'expansion' of one's heart

and knowledge. What happens in the *tuṟavu* stage is that the universal brotherhood feeling is developed by transcending the limitations of love. What is required in *tuṟavu* according to Tiruvaḷḷuvar is that one's egoism (which makes one say: 'This is I' and 'This is mine') should be got over (*yān enatu ennum ceṟukku aṟuppān*).

Tiruvaḷḷuvar says that at that stage of universal feeling even the body is not wanted; even without the sense-organs and other organs of feeling and knowing the man of universal consciousness knows and feels as others. The body which is usually necessary for our experience becomes an unnecessary limitation for the one who has truly renounced. But we do not know whether anybody has really renounced the body for, as the *Bhagavad-Gītā* puts it, one can never renounce one's actions. One has to breathe even if one were to live on air. Therefore one can never think of living in inactivity.

It is however significant to note that Tiruvaḷḷuvar too does not emphasise bodily renunciation. In fact he does not talk of renouncing one's wife in the stage of *tuṟavaṟam* even. It is clear thus that for Tiruvaḷḷuvar real *tuṟavu* is getting rid of the small ego and attaining an universalistic attitude. The Tamil term *aruḷ* stands for such an unrestricted, unqualified, unlimited love. Hence the characteristic feature of *tuṟavu* is said to be *aruḷ*.

The necessity for developing such an universal love can be appreciated from the fact that there is a lot of suffering in the world. The positive aspect of universal love consists in the individual (who has attained the stage of universal love) not doing anything which is injurious to other beings. This is referred to as *ahimsā* (non-injury, non-violence). Though it 'sounds' negative, it is really positive in content. Though from the point of view of our world,—the relative world in which we are living,—we are explaining it as 'not doing an injury', it is really positive

in import. It should also be noted that whenever one is talking in terms of 'my country', 'my people', 'my home', 'my language', etc., this kind of restriction on the real self (which is universal) is really a barrier to real freedom. Real freedom comes in only when one blossoms forth to perfection, and that kind of perfection is reached in the *tuṟavu* stage.

According or Tiruvaḷḷuvar there are two characteristics of people who have taken to the observance of non-injury as a principle in life. The first consists in the person putting up with suffering when it is inflicted on him through acts of violence by others. The second consists in the individual not doing injury to others (*vuyiṟkku uṟukaṇ ceyyāmay*). It should be emphasised here that this attitude of non-injury has a positive base — it is born out of love for the others, what may be referred to as 'reverence for life'. Mahatma Gandhi has explained how *ahiṁsā* is not a negative virtue merely but connotes a positive quality or feeling possessed by the individual.

At a deeper level of analysis, it is seen that *ahiṁsā* is but an aspect of *dharma* or righteousness. No action, especially at the level of the one who preaches and practises universal love can be *merely* an action. It is invariably accompanied by sweet *words* and is grounded on *truth*. Truth is speaking that which is devoid of any evil or even holding a *potentiality* for evil or suffering by anyone. In this sense *truth is love*. It may not be an exaggeration to state that the 'speaker of truth' always resides in the heart of people. Truth is also to be understood as the expression of love from within one's heart.

In this context Śaṁkara's interpreting three terms, *ṛta*, *satya* and *dharma* is significant. According to him *ṛta* is something which refers to purity of thought, the truthfulness of the mind. *Satya* is purity of speech, truthfulness expressed in words. *Dharma* is purity of action, the truthfulness of outward or 'physical expression'. It is

rather surprising that Tamil has three distinct words almost corresponding to the three Sanskrit words. We do not know whether Śaṁkara who was born in Kāladi, which was a part of the land where Tamil was spoken in those days was inspired to make this wonderful, beautiful explanation in terms of what he could have thought in Tamil. The three terms are: *uṇmai*, *vāymai* and *meimmai*. They mean the same thing. But, *uṇmai* is the essence of something within man, i. e., the mental aspect. *Vaymai* in a sense is the purity of our mouth (*vāi*) or speech. That is *satya*, which Śaṁkara explains. *Meimmai* is the purity of the body or bodily actions That is *dharma*. The explanation of the three words by Śaṁkara helps us to understand them much better than the distinction made in Tamil between *vāymai*, *uṇmai* and *meimmai*. The words are quite often considered to be synonymns, but it is not really so. This is apart from the fact that no language can afford to have too many words for one idea. Tiruvaḷḷuvar himself speaks of *vāymai*, *meimmai* and *uṇmai* in *Tirukkuṟaḷ* in the chapter on *truth*:

"A man who is always pure in his heart, is always in the heart of the people."

> *"uḷḷāttāl poyyātu aḻukin, ulakattār*
> *uḷḷattuḷ ellām uḷan"*

When Mahatma Gandhi suffered martyrdom, the whole world was aghast. That was because he had been living a life of truth. Therefore, he is seen in the heart of everyone in this world.

Tiruvaḷḷuvar emphasises that the man of universal consciousness is pure in his mind and thought, pure in his speech and pure also in his actions. Now, these are the characteristic features of the man who has renounced the "limitations of relationship."

This cosmic attitude is discernible in a few people even from the time of their birth. But, what happens to

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the generality of mankind? We can also reach that universal consciousness by a process of gradual development. This is *tuṟavu* or *saṁnyāsa*. In the Buddhist tradition *bhikṣus* are picturised as renouncing the world and becoming one with the world. They are considered to have transcended the limitations imposed by their families or even by their own nations. Similarly in Jainism we have the *yatis* as against the *śrāvakas*. Various stages of realising perfection here, the stages of *muni*, *sādhu*, *ācārya*, *upādhyāya*, *arahat* and *siddha* are described. This connotes the gradual spiritual development but they stand apart in that they do not claim any relationship with their own families or the place of their birth. In Christianity we have the 'clergy'. Of course, now, the 'clergy' also has his family; but originally as in the Catholic church, clergies had no relationship with their own family of their own country; they were considered as citizens of the world.

The characteristic features of these highly developed souls have been noted by Tiruvaḷḷuvar. There is something universal about these groups of people who always live with universal consciousness or with the feeling of universal brotherhood. The other group belongs to the class of "house-holders". The house-holder's stage is referred to as the *grahasthāśrama* in Sanskrit and in Tamil it is called *illaṟam*. Though the house-holder's life starts with the home, the ultimate ideal posited for him is reaching the stage of universal consciousness or universal brotherhood.

Here, the heart must enter. As long as the heart does not enter there is no question of any true relationship springing. Therefore, Tiruvaḷḷuvar first emphasises this love, though it is in relation to the people whom we know. This we call *anpu* as contrasted with *aruḷ* which is 'unrelated' love. The love which is in terms of limited relationship is basic. This has to be distinguished from our desire.

Let us take the example of a man who nourishes a lamb — not out of love for it but in the hope that it will become fat and he may one day slaughter it and sell it or prepare a sumptuous feast for himself and others. Here, the attachment to the lamb is not born out of love. It is born out of his desire or personal selfishness. Love is something which is indicative of the fact that one goes out of himself whereas in a heart filled with desire one is still within himself and everything is considered in terms of desire-fulfilment. It may be that sometimes one is prepared to sacrifice even his body in his own selfish interest. That is what Sūrapanma did. He performed a great *yajña* and in that he offered himself — his own body. He simply jumped into the fire and was burnt away. But, he told his brother, "When God appears pray that all of us should be restored to life and that we should rule the whole world — the whole universe." This sacrifice is born of selfish desire and not out of love, says Tiruvaḷḷuvar. Even their bones are for others (*enpum uriyar piṟarkku*). But then, the commentators explain. It is all for others only (*enpum uṟiyar piṟarkku*). They have nothing for themselves. They do not want anything when they give away their life. This is real sacrifice (*yajña*). For instance, Dadhīci is said to have offered his own spinal cord to Indra so that Indra could kill the demon. Dadhīci never thought of anything for himself. He sacrificed himself for the sake of others. That exemplifies real love. That is how Tiruvaḷḷuvar defines love. In the *Kuṟaḷ* a distinction is drawn between human beings and 'moving corpses'. How is one to find out the difference? How is one to differentiate between the moving corpse and the living man? 'Life' for the former consists in *love* whereas for the other it consists in physical breathing merely. He is "only the skeleton with the skin which walks on", in the words of Tiruvaḷḷuvar (*enpu tōl pōrta uṭampu*). Thus the real characteristic of a man who is 'alive' is *love*. In the absence of love he is to be considered 'dead' even though he may be 'living'.

Love is thus the basis even of the life of a householder. The way in which he is 'initiated' as a householder is by his marrying and setting up home. Basically there is the sexual need which has to be satisfied and the satisfaction of the need helps the perpetuation of the species. In addition there is the need for comradery and the couple meet their responsibilities by complementing their functions. Indian social philosophers, while appreciating the complementariness of the sexes are also appreciative of spiritualisation of love between man and wife. Hence marriage is considered by them as a sacrament. It is not merely having sexual relations—with the narrow aim of fulfilling the needs of sex. Just as when two people become friends there is an ennoblement born, when a man and a woman come together in marriage there is a certain ennoblement, they become spiritually 'evolved.' In the absence of spiritual evolution, family or the sexual binding is of no worth. The *akam* literature of love of the Caṅkam age speaks of idealised love. Marriage is not to be considered as helping the individual to attain satisfaction of sexual desires. Kapilar, one of the great Cankam poets, has sung the *Kuriñcippāttu* emphasising the message of idealised love. After having described the lover as pining for the 'partner' he refers to the couple as coming together and taking a vow that they shall be ever united. According to the old custom, both of them had to take a handful of water and drink it together. The vow did not connote their resolving to live together and getting progeny. Kapilar points to the spiritual ideal when he describes the couple as saying "For others our doors will always be kept open. When all had been fed to their satisfaction, we shall share with joy what remains."

Here one sees the universalistic attitude of the couple even on the first day of their meeting. Their ideal is not merely the satisfaction of their ordinary carnal pleasures. It is something more. Therefore when they come together, they take the vow: "This

union is for satisfying all the requirements of the needy and our house shall always be kept open so that all the needy could have their desires fulfilled and we shall enjoy our food, only after they have been satisfied."

This great ideal of love according to the Tamil tradition was explained by Kapilar to an Aryan king, Bṛhadṛta. Bṛhadṛata himself, having understood the implication and the sacredness of this type of approach to love, composed a love song in *Kuṟuntokai.* Here one sees the spiritualisation of love.

A modern poet like Bharati Dasan in Tamil has written a kind of a narrative poem called *Kutumpa Viḷakku* ("The light of the Household") and the last part of it is most interesting and significant. It is the concept of *mutumaikkātal*. The couple have become very old, beyond the age of ninety or so. They cannot even move but still there is love. It is no more physical. It is something intellectual, moral and spiritual. Thus, ideal love is portrayed as being much more than physical intimacy, much more than leading a life of passion. This description of the contemporary writer seems to be a clear reflection of Kapilar's conception seen in the *Kuriñcippāttu*: "These are people who are very bad in themselves. That is why they impute all sorts of motives to women. Are there not bad men? Why blame the women alone?" In a significant reference the Upaniṣad says, "If there is no adulterer, there would not be an adulteress." Similarly Manu praises women: they are the ornament of the house; wherever women are not honoured there the Gods also will not *be*. Similar sentiments find an echo in Tiruvaḷḷuvar also. In the Vedic times, she was considered to be a *sahadharmacāriṇi*. Whether it is *artha* or *kāma*, or *mokṣa* or *dharma*, she is a partner of man. Maitreyi's pleading for sharing the knowledge of spirit with Yājñavalkya and reference to Brahmavādinis would also point to the elevated conception of women in ancient India. Tiruvaḷḷuvar too never condemns

women. He says: "A woman is the real aid, guide and philosopher. She is the life-mate" (*vāḻkkai tuṇai*). In a couplet he refers to women as "preservers of family-honour." She is also considered as the "care-taker", for she takes care of the husband even as the mother takes care of the child (*pēṇi*). She is also considered to be capable of protecting herself (*taṟkāttu*) She is called *peṇ*. The root *pēṇ* means "to nourish." Therefore *peṇ* is one who nourishes. Tiruvaḷḷuvar thus widens the meaning of *peṇ*. It is not merely that she provides physical nourishment; she provides mental as well as spiritual nourishment, the honour of the family, the life of her man,—in fact she takes care of everything which concern him—in addition to protecting herself. Therefore, Vaḷḷuvar says: "If the woman is not there, what is there in a household?" Everything depends upon her. This is indeed a glorious picture of a woman.

Thus, *love* which holds the key to the institution of family which is 'entered into, after marriage points to the continuity between two 'stages' of human life, the stage of the house-holder and that of the ascetic. Love which provides, to start with, the basic bond between man and wife and between them and their children is seen to be the instrument which helps them to expand their love to engulf, through stages, the whole of humanity and then the entire animate creation.

To sum up the basic philosophy of institution according to the Indian tradition that we have attempted to interpret: exhortation to transform limited love at the level of the family into unlimited love at the level of the person who considers the entire creation as members of his own family signifies the necessity to idealise about the quality of life of the individuals who participate in the various social institutions. If love, truth, virtue and righteousness are to be developed at every stage of development and in every type of human situation, it is only indicative of the fact that the various institutions provide

opportunities and also the necessary training for the individual to realise the human potentiality fully. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's conception in regard to the necessity for enkindling human consciousness is a clear reflection of the spirit of Indian social philosophy. For it represents a great attempt to provide, in our own age, a common platform for all religions and cultures, science and technologies, literature and arts for helping man to raise the level of his consciousness and eventually to fulfilling basic human aspirations which are perhaps found deep down in the human psyche.

LECTURE FOUR

We have seen that the institution of family, though starting with the need for fulfilling sexual desire ultimately is instrumental to personality development. Family can be truly referred to as the nucleus of the human community and it is worth reiterating at this point that in the Tamil tradition Tiruvaḷḷuvar has well brought out its significance in various ways. Firstly he mentions the various good qualities to be developed by the individual, viz. hospitality, gratitude, good conduct, sweet words, not injuring the heart of others, etc. These are considered significant in the context of developing an universal outlook in the individual, and the chapter entitled *Oppuravu* in *Tirukkuṟaḷ* lays clear emphasis on this quality of developing an altruistic outlook. *Oppuravu* is what is called in modern Tamil *ottal*. The individual identifies himself with his society. Tiruvaḷḷuvar says in a couplet that this man is like a cloud. The cloud may be somewhere, but it comes to benefit an area somewhere else and there is no question of its expecting anything in return. The three similies given by Tiruvaḷḷuvar to illustrate this ultimate ideal of man (becoming altruistic) are worth referring to here. The altruistic type of individual is compared first to a tank from which everybody draws his drinking water. Whatever he has, is not for himself, but for others, just as the reservoir does not enjoy the water itself. If it were to enjoy itself, it will become stagnant and petrified. It is great because others would

be benefitted by it. Then again, there is a tree full of fruits in the midst of a village and hence is accessible to everyone. The individual who has realised the ideal is likewise accessible and is helpful to all who need his help. The third simile is that of a medicinal plant, every part of which is consumable as medicine—the root, the leaf, the bark, the fruit and the flower. Similarly the altruistic type of individual is almost "consumed" by his society; the peak of self-sacrifice is clearly exemplified by his life. The *illaṟam-tuṟavaṟam* idea is thus indicative of the type of "schooling" the individual undergoes before attaining an universalistic outlook. In terms of the *Āśrama*-scheme (which refers to four stages, the *brahmacarya*, *grahastha*, *vānaprastha* and *saṁnyāsa*) again the individual is to *ultimately* attain a detached outlook—'detached' from the narrow bonds of love. The various types of discipline prescribed for the various stages are all aimed at such a progressive development of a 'cosmic concern'. For example the individual being allowed to live with his wife in the *vānaprastha* stage and his being asked to wander about from place to place all by himself in the *saṁnyāsāśrama* stage are aimed at developing gradually the stage of universal concern.

It should be noted, however that though the *āśrama* conception speaks of four stages the first stage as *brahmacarya*, the second as *grahastha*, the third as *vānaprastha* and the fourth as *saṁnyāsa*—we find that one can, without going through the *grahastha* stage, become a *saṁnyāsin*. Śaṁkara or Nammāḻvār never went through these stages. They were born *saṁnyāsins* i.e., they were born with universal consciousness Though for all ordinary men these *āśramas* represent several "stages", for people who are "advanced" even at the time of their birth, these stages need not be considered as necessarily to be gone through. Anyway, as Bergson has pointed out, there are two kinds of morality—the morality of the man who starts with the smaller 'I' and the morality

of the other man who starts with the universal consciousness. It is against the backdrop provided by the *illaṟam - tuṟavaṟam* scheme on the one hand and the *āśrama*-scheme on the other that the basic philosophy of education as an institution can be grasped fully.

The student is called the *Brahmacāri*, one who travels in the path of Brahman, or we may interpret it as one who is moving in Brahman itself. Here, the spiritual aspect is emphasised. In this sense the Creative Intelligence concept of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi is extremely significant. The aim of every individual is realising Creative Intelligence or Brahman. There is a verse in Tamil which reads :

> *muppatām āṇṭaḷavil mūnṟaṟoru poruḷait*
> *tappāmē cārānē āmākil*
> *kalaiyaḷavē ākumām tān kaṟṟa kalvi*

Before one completes his thirtieth year, he must get rid of desire, hatred and illusion (*kāmam*, *vekuḷi* and *mayakkam*). For only then the unique in man, — the universal and omnipresent principle can be attained. If one does not attain that before the thirtieth year, all his study is mere book-learning. Learning has not become an experience. It was because of this higher conception of education that the student's life was called the life of a *brahmacāri*.

Fortunately in our own times Maharishi Mahesh Yogi has pointed out that this is not a very difficult task. The simple technique of transcendental meditation requires that one should close his eyes in the morning for twenty minutes and in the evening for twenty minutes (only for fifteen minutes in the morning and fifteen minutes in the evening for a student). If the technique is followed, according to Maharishi, Brahman or the Creative Intelligence can be contacted. The mind, at the beginning stages, contacts it for a moment, then the contact is for a longer duration. After a time, when the

stresses and strains in the nervous system are removed, the mind becomes calm and lays itself flat on the Absolute within for the twenty minutes Then, when the practice of meditation is continued, the feeling of oneness with the Ultimate, the Absolute, also continues. It can then gradually be extended to continue all through the day. It is called cosmic consciousness.

Even in the West, so many people are experiencing it. There are people who have reached the cosmic conscious stage and there are people who have experienced unitary consciousness. Therefore, the cosmic consciousness stage is not a mere ideal or a mere dream. It is something which can be attained here and now. Unless one reaches it, even ordinary studies are not possible. Now, what happens? There is the present crisis in education. There are so many problems. First of all, with reference to the students in the primary stage—we are told that out of every hundred students admitted into the first standard, only forty pass the fifth standard; scarcely two per cent pass beyond the higher secondary level and even in the Universities, we know the failure rate. How are these problems to be explained? Even at the slightest opportunity, students try to go into the streets rather than be inside the class-rooms. They are fed up with life; they get bored. They see no relevance of their studies. They lose all their patience; they become angry with society and burn buses and other public properties. Unemployment is almost universal. This is all the result of a wrong type of education. Providing beautiful buildings, good libraries and top-ranking teachers alone cannot make for a good system of education. What should not be disregarded in the process is the 'basic material' — the student himself, — his aspirations and the like.

In the 'modern' world — our nervous system is subjected to various kinds of shock because of the stimuli of light, sound etc. and experiences stresses and strains.

The nervous system is after all a physical counterpart of the mind and when this counterpart is deranged, the mind also gets deranged. The mind which is infinite becomes warped.

The student is comparable to a big ship in which all the waters of the sea could be transported, but when the ship has become so overloaded with dust, rubbish and mud, there is scarcely any space even for a tea cup. What amount of water can 'it' take? The ocean of knowledge is there. The student comes with his 'cup' (full of dirt, stresses and strains) for taking the knowledge, and the 'cup' could hold only two or three spoonfuls in it and if the 'ocean' is attempted to be poured into it, it is overpowered by the pressure of water. Now, precisely that is happening. Therefore, what have we to do? What has been attempted in early times was to make the student observe celibacy and enable him to realise the Ultimate. When the mind is subjected to such a discipline the relaxation-technique which is in-built in it helps 'refining' the nervous system. In effect it is protected against stresses and strains and it is enabled to 'absorb' whatever is 'presented' to it. Knowledge is not something foreign to us. It is in our very nature. Hence there is a natural affinity to learning and in an ideal system of education motivation comes of its own accord. Education then is looked at not from the point of view of its 'utility' but is considered necessary for personality-growth, the important pre-requisite for meaningful living. Such a sublime philosophy of education is found in the ancient Indian tradition. We read in the Upaniṣads and in the later books that the children—students — went and lived with the teacher (*guru*). The 'gurukula' provided a family atmosphere and the *guru* was not merely a teacher but was a kind of father. He was as kind as a father and moulded the personality of the children entrusted to his care The students formed part of the household of the teacher: they went and reared the cattle, they ploughed the land, they produced everything for

that university of a *gurukula*; they did not pay any fees. They themselves by their hard work ran the university. It was not merely 'earning while learning' but learning and running an university and a 'society' in all its aspects. Thus it would be wrong to consider that the system of education in ancient India consisted merely in memorising the Vedas and studying the Upaniṣads. That education did not consist in getting by heart the contents of the Vedas is evident from the *Ṛg-Veda* which compares one who simply recites the Vedas without understanding it, to a frog which goes on croaking endlessly.

The various *vidyas* ('subjects') prescribed for the student as also the way in which education was imparted to students in the *gurukula* system would go to show that the ancient philosophers had a broad-based concept. Education was also considered to be intimately related to life — understanding the secular as well as the spiritual aspects of life. The method of instruction as also the routine fixed for the students impressed the latter with the essentials of good life. Dignity of labour as also the necessity of leading a life which was free from prejudices, were impressed on the students. Perhaps Mahatma Gandhi's ideas on basic education were derived from the fundamentals of the ancient Indian philosophy of education.

It may not be an exaggeration to suggest here that when the fundamentals of the ancient philosophy of education were forgotten, many problems concerning individual and social life cropped up, necessitating 're-forms' in education. It is of interest to note here that some modern ideas on reforming the educational system, have their roots in our ancient system. 'Educational reform' as envisaged today is by means of discussions in which the persons concerned participate. By exchanging ideas they are expected to find solutions to problems. The system of *Pariṣads* which formed an integral part of

education in its most comprehensive sense consisted in deep analyses of fundamental problems. Even when society changed, they wanted to ensure continuity as well as growth.

The integrated approach that the ancient Indian philosophers had to education was perhaps for averting serious problems that we today experience. Since the system of education was life-centred and idealistically-oriented it had a potentiality to offer solutions to pedagogical problems.

Eṉṉoruvaṉ cāṉ tuṇaiyum kallatavāṟu ?

Why should man be learning till he dies? Because education is life-centred. When we appreciate this, we realise that personality-integration that education facilitates is responsible for the educated person feeling at home anywhere in the world. Without any inhibition the individual is able to communicate with people belonging to different countries and inheriting different types of cultures. This idea seems to be summed up well in the popular Tamil dictum "*yātum ūrē yāvarum kēḷir*". The two basic aims of education according to Indian tradition are development of an integrated personality for the individual and contribution to the emergence of an unified society.

It is interesting in this context to refer briefly to the aims of education according to Bertrand Russell. Development of character is considered by Russell to be the most important aim of education. But the foundation for good character is laid by a good physique, — vitality as Russell calls it — and courage which stands not merely for the bravery exhibited by a warrior in the battle field but also for the 'mental strength', — the 'courage of conviction', which, as in the case of Mahatma Gandhi, would enable the individual to stand firmly for ideals and put up a stiff resistance when ideals are at stake. The other important element of an ideal system of education,

according to Russell is the development of sensitivity to the sufferings of the world. The same amount of sensitivity we show to the sufferings of our kith and kin, we must be capable of (showing) in regard to even those people who are 'distant' both geographically and linguistically-culturally. Education which enables us to live in the world of abstractions must also be capable of developing in us abstract sensitivity referred to above. Above all, a good system of education should be capable of making the individual take an intelligent approach to problems. The term intelligence refers to mental understanding (of whatever needs to be understood) as also to 'application'. These aspects of education, when considered alongside those mentioned earlier enable the individual to get a rounded personality. Russell's theory has, it needs to be remembered here, been considered to be psychologically and philosophically well-founded.

In the light of this the Indian concept of education becomes understandable in its true perspective. For, it seems to have carefully taken into account the various aspects of human life as is found in Russell's theory but takes the goal of education to its logical corollary. The man-centred system that it was, it insisted on the spiritual end of education as the ultimate goal. It was because of this that the institutions of marriage and family were considered in terms of high ideals for the individual and society and were evaluated in spiritual terms. We shall content ourselves with citing only two ideas from *Tirukkuṟaḷ*. Referring to the high ideals that should inspire a family, Tiruvaḷḷuvar observes that society should be proud of the child (that is born) and praise the father by saying "What penance have you done in your previous birth to bring forth this child, the jewel of this society ?" "Winning of such a praise from society is itself the expression of gratitute the son pays to the father," Tiruvaḷḷuvar insists.

Secondly, even when pre-marital love is referred to by Tiruvaḷḷuvar, — reflecting the Caṅkam ideals of love, — romantic love was not what was postulated as the ideal. It was only a case of seeing to it that the basic human desires are given full expression to at the appropriate time in one's life so that the larger spiritual ideal becomes a reality.

We may point out here that these ideas in the *Kuṟaḷ* are well in keeping with the 'earlier Tamil tradition' as found in *Tolkāppiyam* which points out that a spiritualised person is not one who 'goes away' but one who benefits not merely his own relatives but also all the 'others' who are considered by him as members of the spiritual family. The end is mentioned as *ciṟantatu*, the Best or The Good, in philosophical terminology. Tolkāppiyar's idea seems to correspond to the Advaita concept of *sarvamukti* (salvation for all). In that state one gets himself 'dissolved' in the Absolute. The ideal of Bodhisattva that we find in Buddhism is similarly rooted in the larger spiritual ideal. Hence it seems to us that accusing Indian philosophy as individualistically-oriented doesn't have any basis at all.

It is in the light of these basic ideas concerning the institutions of family and education that the institution of religion becomes extremely significant. Religion was not something entirely separate or unique and unrelated to life. It is to be understood in terms of the foundational ideas we discussed when we referred to institutions which are considered "secular".

Much against the commonly accepted view, we may suggest here that the ideas of religion can be understood more in terms of the various sacraments (referred to as *samskāras*) prescribed than in terms of mere abstract ideas concerning Reality or Being. From the time of conception sacraments are accorded a place of importance. The various phases of the individual's 'growth' are associated with some sacrament or the other. The birth

of the child, the completion of its first year of life, the first time the child is given a 'meal', commencement of the child's education at school, marriage etc. are all interlinked with sacraments. A study and analysis of the sacraments clearly go to show that they have deep ethical, spiritual and cosmic (social, not excluded) significance. They point to the fact that the various phases of the individual's development possess an integrative-cosmic significance. The individual is never considered in terms only of *his* individual development but rather in terms of the deeper significance of his Being, so that the religious aspects of his life are deeply ingrained in and influence all other aspects of his life. Religion in this deeper sense provides the strong foundation for all the institutions in the Indian tradition.

Hence religious institutions like the saṅgha of the Buddhist and Jaina traditions and the institutions comparable to them in the Hindu tradition have deeper significance than they are generally construed to possess. The tradition of discussion, reflection and attempting to get clarity of ideas that we find as basic to these religious institutions would further confirm our view that religion provided the sum and substance of all other institutions. This seems to be one of the meanings of the view that religion and philosophy are intimately related to each other in the Indian tradition. In sum we have suggested that social institutions, according to Indian social philosophy, can be understood only in terms of the religious ideas which they embody. We would also like to emphasise here that the various criticisms levelled against Indian social philosophy are to be ultimately traced to an improper understanding of this aspect of Indian tradition, the impression that institutions are either unrelated to the deeper aspects of man or are to be understood only in terms of other individuals.

LECTURE FIVE

We shall now consider in outline, another important conception underlying Indian social philosophy, the conception of *puruṣārtha* (or the 'ends of human life'). Traditionally, *dharma* (virtue), *artha* (economic value), *kāma* (desire) and *mokṣa* (spiritual value) are considered to be the four 'ends'. The idea behind the scheme may be stated to be common to the different traditions of Indian thought. For instance, even a Jain writer like Pavananti, when he begins a work on Tamil Grammar, says: "The aim and end of this grammatical study is the scheme of values" (*aṟam, poruḷ, inpam, vīṭu aṭaital nūṟppayanē*). This is the common purpose, whatever be the studies undertaken. It is interesting to state here that this closely resembles the view discernible in Sanskritic writings.

The four *puruṣārthas* are often spoken of in terms of *trivarga — dharma, artha* and *kāma*. *Dharma* is sometimes visualised to include *mokṣa* also and this is extremely important to get at its deeper significance. For instance, in the *Mahābhārata*, Bhīṣma speaks of *mokṣa-dharma*. It seems to us that this idea is fully explicated in *Tirukkuṟaḷ* in terms of the development of human personality to its perfection. Perfection is conceived in terms of the Absolute. Sometimes Indian philosophy is condemned as being 'other-worldly', — as believing in life-negation. But it is important to notice that in any system of philosophy in India, there is a place of importance accorded

to the *puruṣārthas*. This means an important place is given to *kāma* and *artha* as well. Man is a creature of impulses. He has a number of desires and these desires have been taken into consideration in the scheme of the *puruṣārthas*. No doubt they are highly idealised and spiritualised We have considered the institution of family and have maintained that it has its basis in sex. The statement is as much true of the Tamilian approach to the value-scheme as it is to the Sanskritic scheme. We have seen how love has been spiritualised even in the caṅkam verses which speak of human love The Sanskrit term *kāma* stands for desire in general though it means specifically the sexual desire. But we have to take it in a wider sense as comprehending desires of various type Likewise the Tamil term *kāmam* stands for the desire-aspect of human personality and for sex-love.

Tiruvaḷḷuvar considers *kāma* as idealised love. The treatment of love in *Tirukkuṟaḷ* is something unique. Unlike Vātsyāyana and others, Tiruvaḷḷuvar does not go into the physical (sexual) aspects of love. He deals only with the *feeling* of love which is spoken of in the classical caṅkam works. Adopting the caṅkam method of dramatic monologues he goes into the analysis of the love-theme. In brief the method of monologues consists in expressing thoughts and ideas through one or the other of the various characters,—the hero, the heroine or the heroine's companion. Every couplet in the *Kāmattuppāl* (the section on love) of the *Kuṟaḷ* is a monologue and the couplets are very effective in conveying their meaning. Love has been so much spiritualised and idealised in the *Kuṟaḷ* that the Nāyanmārs and Āḻvārs who sang their devotional hymns in the land took up this idealised love as the vehicle for expressing their love towards God. *Tirumantiram*, one of the canonical works of the Śaivites refers to *anpu* in this deep sense of love also. Ordinarily speaking the term *anpu* does not signify 'godly love'. When we reach the caṅkam age of the development of

Tamil love poetry it is so very well idealised and spiritualised that we feel that it is not the same as is found usually in 'romantic love' as portrayed by the great poets. No wonder, therefore, *Tirumantiram* holds that *anpu* refers not to ordinary love but to the love of Śiva, the love which is Śiva.

But it should be stated that even if we take love as described by Vātsyāyana and others, we find that it is raised to a higher level. It is not mere animal passion, though it is not spiritualised and idealised as in *Tirukkuṟaḷ*. Even when Tiruvaḷḷuvar speaks of the life-companion or the wife (*vāḻkkai tuṇaivi*), he refers to this kind of spiritualised love.

Thus *kāma* does not mean only sex impulse but it includes, as already stated, all the desires which have given birth to art and culture. In Indian social philosophy *kāma* in its wider sense stands for the development of art and culture. The Tamils speak of art itself as 'Tamiḻ'. This is rather surprising. 'Tamiḻ' means sweetness; therefore, art is the sweetest thing. The arts are visualised under three heads *Muttamiḻ* — *iyal Tamiḻ*, *icai Tamiḻ* and *kūttu Tamiḻ*. These three are intimately related to the three aspects of man's personality : music is concerned with the mouth, drama and dance, with the action of the body; and literature is concerned with the mind. Hence all the varied arts could be brought under these three aspects of human personality. In another way, one may say that *jñānaśakti* is related to literature, *kriyāśakti* to dance and *icchāśakti* to music.

The other value *artha* is similarly to be understood as having a comprehensive significance. In its restricted sense *artha* stands for wealth, but the term wealth itself has meant different things at different periods of time. For example, in ancient days, wealth meant merely land; and other things concerning immovable properties were of great moment then. Though in India land has still

that much of importance, other things are also considered significant as constituting wealth. One of the most important of these is money or cash. In addition to these *artha* has meant the organisation of the state. In fact both in the *Artha-Śāstra* and in the *Poruṭpāl* of Tiruvaḷḷuvar's *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, there is not much of a discussion about wealth. Both the classics, however accept the fact that economic wealth as represented by the 'treasury' is an important aspect of the state. In the *Artha-Śāstra*, *artha* means the Kingdom, the political organisation of society. Kauṭilya explains that ordinarily *artha* means wealth; but also that it means a territory in which there is an orderly government. In any case wealth has significance only when there is an orderly society with a government and this is emphasised by Kauṭilya. We find a similar approach in the *Kuṟaḷ* which gives importance to *poruḷ* both as an economic value and as providing the foundation for the state as a political unit. At a deeper level of analysis we find that desires (including the desire for wealth or possessions) need to be channelised properly so that personality-integration and social organisation can both become possible. A significant statement we find in a Tamil philosophic work is highly suggestive of the basic approach of the ancient Tamils to the question of values. In *Tirumantiram* Tirumūlar says, "Those who say that you should restrain or control are all fools" (*aṭakku, aṭakku enpārkaḷ aṟivilār)*. Even those who advocate control cannot themselves do so. What is meant is that sublimation rather than curbing the desires is important and hence should be insisted upon. This is evident from Tirumūlar's usage of the term *maṭai māṟṟal*. *Maṭai maṟṟal* refers to channelising the waters carefully so that they can be utilised properly. It is common knowledge that the floods in the various rivers will be considered 'wasted' if they simply join the ocean; on the other hand, if channels are dug to change the force and direction of the flooding waters and stored in big reservoirs and 'let out', it is more useful in that irrigation of vast areas of land becomes possible. Desires (or 'passions'),

according to Tirumūlar are in a similar way to be regulated and made 'useful'. This is the basic idea behind the Tamilian approach to the value-scheme. Raw passions need canalisation so that they can be used to build up the human personality. Here a brief reference to the idea of the family as an institution might be useful. In terms of the historical development of the institution of the state it is said that it has its roots in the family as a social institution. Kinship is considered to expand and give rise to the tribe with the trade guilds playing an important role in consolidating the gains of institutional life. We may venture to suggest that the ideals and the procedures of democracy, autonomy and culture which can be seen in these trade guilds as economic units perhaps gradually asserted themselves, took a definite shape and eventually paved the way for the state as a political institution.

Without going into any of the details in regard to the social structure of the family we may suggest here that it provides us some insight into the sovereignty aspect of the state which evolves later on. The head of the family is considered to be responsible for the structure of the individual's personality and also the social structure.

It is in this sense that the importance of the state as a social institution is emphasised. After all, the state is an expansion of the family. The family becomes too big and therefore creates other groups. The kinship is expanded and the whole group becomes a tribe. Now father is the leader of the tribe and expands it into a big state in time. Both for the welfare and progress of the family as a whole and for the development, growth and integration of personality of every member of the family, the other responsibility of the head of the family is 'exercised'. This signifies that autonomy is to be given to the individual members, though the head of the family should, when it becomes necessary, control

and chastise them. This power which is always associated with the head of the family perhaps later on becomes the sovereign power vested in those responsible for governing it. Sovereignty as such may seem to be an abstract power, a potentiality which rests with the sovereign (one person or many persons), but it is concretely manifested in situations in the state which may necessitate the exercise of it. In the light of the brief analysis of the *idea of state as an institution* the approach of the Tamils, as discernible in Tiruvaḷḷuvar's *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, becomes highly significant.

As in the Sanskritic writings dealing with the state viz., Kauṭilya's, *Artha-Śāstra*, Kāmāndaka's *Nīti-sāra* and Śukra's *Nīti-sāra*, in the *Kuṟaḷ* also we find an analysis of the state in terms of its several limbs, the King, the ministers, the army, the treasury, the allies, the fort, the territory and the people. But Tiruvaḷḷuvar does not go into details like how the king should be appointed and coronated, and what his daily routine should be. Nor, does he go into the details of how the 'Assembly' should be constituted, how the ministers should conduct the 'business of the house', etc. In a similar way he skips over details like the organisation of the fort and the 'tactics' of war and peace, of open and closed diplomacy. His great concern is with enduring principles of the state as an institution. Treating the institution as basically a *human* 'process' he analyses the basic human qualities which are essential to make the state what it should be. So his approach to the institution of state is more in terms of referring to the ideals that it should stand for and the ideals which should inspire the people and the others than in terms of 'discussing details'. Hence we shall refer here only to certain aspects to Tiruvaḷḷuvar's analysis which we consider important in the context of the philosophic approach to the state.

While speaking of the King, Tiruvaḷḷuvar speaks of *oḷi* and *iṟaimai* and indicates principles of sovereignty.

Even though the ruler may be sleeping, sovereignty is potentially there and everybody is afraid of it and acts as though the King is awake. It is not meant that the King is a divine power. The importance of the exercise of sovereign power in the state through the king is all that is emphasised. Tiruvaḷḷuvar approaches the whole question of the state from a purely humanistic point of view. He takes the king as an ordinary man who has duties and responsibilities. For instance, while referring to education (*kalvi*) he does not think in terms of a separate system of education for the kings, i.e. a system of education which is not applicable to other people, his subjects. He treats education in general, — the principles and purpose of education for man in general. What is good for the ordinary man is good for the king too. Education provides the individual with a new insight into things. As Tiruvaḷḷuvar puts it, the eyes become but 'sores', — openings in the body—unless the person gets insight into things as a result of education. The contrast is clear from the fact that even animals have got eyes, but we cannot speak meaningfully of education in their case. Tiruvaḷḷuvar seems to maintain that the function of the human eye does not consist merely in 'seeing' but in 'discernment' in so far as physical sight helps the mind to draw a distinction between good and evil. Hence Tiruvaḷḷuvar's referring in the abstract to the qualities which make of a king or a minister or an ambassador, is extremely significant. A careful study of the various chapters dealing with the various organs of the state clearly reveals the fact that Tiruvaḷḷuvar is attempting to give us a philosophy of the institution of the state, rather than merely offering us a descriptive account of the constitution of the state or of the various organs constituting the machinery of the state.

We may make specific mention of the treatment of two subjects, viz., inter-state relationships and citizenship. The states adjoining are considered to be 'limbs' of the state (under discussion). This sounds strange indeed but

a little reflection provides an insight into Vaḷḷuvar's standpoint here. The basic idea seems to be that smaller states cannot live in isolation from the larger ones, and hence what is referred to in modern political terminology as 'balance of power' is recognised as an essential principle in regulating the relationships between various states Otherwise one of the states may become stronger and try to overpower the neighbouring weaker states. Hence a political administrator should always be in a position to judge whether a small state is being overpowered by other stronger neighbours and take the necessary action to maintain the balance of power. But what is of great significance is Tiruvaḷḷuvar's discussing the topic in terms of friendship. The topic of 'allies' is analysed in terms of friendship between *individuals* with which we are all quite familiar. Rather than choosing the language of 'diplomacy', Tiruvaḷḷuvar speaks of *natpu* and dwells on the feeling and value of friendship which is known to even the common man who constitutes the state. The suggestion clearly is that the ideal type of relationship between the states is similar to friendship which ought to characterise relationship between individuals in an ideal society. We would like to refer to this approach as 'humanistic' and to suggest that Tiruvaḷḷuvar is able to avoid diabolical approaches to politics mainly because of this type of approach.

Coming now to Vaḷḷuvar's treatment of the subject of citizenship which we find in the *Kuṟaḷ*, we would like to briefly comment on the commentator Parimēlaḻakar's interpretation of the chapter entitled *Kuṭi*. Parimēlaḻakar's attempt seems to be to fit this chapter into the scheme of the seven organs of state described by the Smṛti and Artha-Śāstra writers. He does not seem to succeed in his attempt at all and this is evident from his treating the thirteen chapters discussing *kuṭi* as miscellaneous topics This interpretation certainly robs Vaḷḷuvar of his originality.

The distinct contribution of the *Kuṟaḷ* can be gauged on the other hand, if we do not treat those thirteen chapters as appendices and by understanding certain other chapters as dealing with the subject of citizenship. For example the chapters on *nāṭu* (territory) help us to get at the meaning of *citizenship*, though on the surface they do not seem to stand for the idea. They both deal with the defence of the country.

In this sense we may suggest that Vaḷḷuvar speaks of fortification in two chapters: in the one entitled *Aṟaṇ* he speaks of the fort and in the other with the title *Nāṭu* he speaks of the morale of the people, the most important fortification. We know that morale is much more important than mere fortification which may be important for protecting territory.

Here it is well to remember that according to some old commentators also the chapters on *Aṟaṇ* and *Nāṭu* have to be considered together. The importance of morale needs reiteration since the chapter on *Nāṭu* portrays its importance and also speaks of the necessity, on the part of the state, to achieve a state of self-sufficiency.

In the light of such an analysis, it is evident that through the chapters on *Kuṭi* Tiruvaḷḷuvar introduces a new element to the discussion of the idea of the state, rather than treat of miscellaneous topics. In the chapters constituting *Kuṭi* Tiruvaḷḷuvar portrays a picture of an ideal man, a perfect man. It may look as if he describes a great sage or a seer, but by implication he is giving us the picture of an ideal citizen, the crown and glory of any state. He seems to say: "Judge the tree by the fruits thereof. Evaluate the state by the quality of its citizens."

The purpose of the state is to 'produce' ideal citizens, —citizens who embody all human virtues like patience,

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love, magnanimity, humility, culture and nobility. It is interesting also to note that Tiruvaḷḷuvar, towards the close of the description of 'Kuṭi' also speaks of the degenerated human being. As if to contrast the ideal state with a degenerated state he has given us also the picture of a man who needs to be condemned. In the chapter entitled *Kayamai* (baseness) he refers to such a debased man. The debased person is one who will do something because he is afraid of punishment or because he is lured by the prospects of fulfilling his mean desires. Hence he pretends to be a law-abiding citizen. He cannot be called a human being at all but he very much resembles one. Tiruvaḷḷuvar remarks that the wonderful thing in the world is that a person who cannot be called a human being at all resembles closely a human being. Thus we get a positive as well as a negative picture of perfection of the individual as well as the state in the concluding chapter of the *Kuṟaḷ*.

Before closing our analysis we would like to reiterate that the idealistic orientation of the state is to be gathered fully from the scheme of values accepted in the *Kuṟaḷ* and that the institution of the state — the philosophy underlying it — is particularly understandable from the analysis of the value of *poruḷ* which offers a parallel to the concept of *artha* in the Sanskritic tradition. It is important to notice that the idealistic approach to the state is not taken in the *Kuṟaḷ* at the expense of the realistic analysis and appraisal of human life. While the idealistic approach to the state that we find in the *Kuṟaḷ* cannot be denied, the realistic approach to the state should not be overlooked either. We may refer to only one instance to substantiate our view here, viz., Tiruvaḷḷuvar's condemning poverty in strong terms. In a significant couplet Vaḷḷuvar says,

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"If it is necessary that life should be led by begging, let that person who is responsible for such a state of affairs be extinguished."[1]

Irantum uyir vāḻtal vēṇṭin parantu
ketuka ulakiyaṟṟiyān.

If the term *ulakiyaṟṟiyān* is interpreted as the Creator of the universe, viz., God, then the couplet would mean "If God is responsible for such a state, let him be destroyed." But since the term *ulaku* in Tamil means also society, the couplet could also be understood to mean: "The person who is responsible for such a state — (whoever is in charge of conducting the affairs of the state or society) — let him be condemned to destruction." Whichever interpretation is accepted, it is clear that Tiruvaḷḷuvar shows his righteous indignation against poverty in human life. The clear meaning is that poverty is a deterrent to any attempt at leading an ideal life—whether it be in terms of the individual's life or in terms of social and political life. It is significant also to note here that the national poet Subramania Bhārati has sung in recent times: "We will destroy the whole world if even one man is compelled to go suffering" (*taniyoruvanukkuṇavilayyanil jakattinai aḻittiṭuvōm*). This is a clear echo of ancient Tamil idealism regarding the state as crystallised in Tiruvaḷḷuvar.

In our brief analysis of the state as an institution we have dwelt with the idealistic approach of Vaḷḷuvar as derivable from the treatment of values. We have argued that the state as an institution is ultimately rooted in the value of *poruḷ* in the Tamil tradition. At the commencement of this lecture we dealt briefly with the scheme of values in general and the 'secular values' (*kāma and artha*) in particular. Reference to the secular values themselves was with a view to indicating that they are closely interrelated. But since we have dealt with the institution based on *kāma* in the previous lecture, we considered only *artha* and the way the state as an institution is to be understood. Here too we considered mainly the Tamilian approach as can be gathered in Tiruvaḷḷuvar's *Tirukkuṟaḷ*.

Before concluding the series of lectures we would like to submit that we have dealt only with the barest

outlines of Indian social philosophy. What we have specifically attempted is to see how far the approach of the Tamils to social philosophy could be understood in the light of Indian social philosophy as is evident from the Sanskritic writings. Obviously a reference to the Sanskritic ideas was both considered necessary and inevitable for our task of indicating the basic approach of the Tamils to social philosophy.

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